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United Nations Environment
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Environment Programme

**Committee of Permanent Representatives to the
United Nations Environment Programme
132nd meeting**
Nairobi, 30 October 2015

Draft minutes of the 131st meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Environment Programme, held on 16 June 2015

Agenda item 1

Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

1. The meeting was opened at 9.45 a.m. on Tuesday, 16 June 2015, by Mr. Sunu Soemarno, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Indonesia to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Chair of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to UNEP.

2. The meeting was attended by 99 participants representing 63 members. A participant from one permanent mission in Geneva also took part in the meeting by videoconference.

3. The Chair welcomed the following new members of the Committee: Mr. Dina Mufti Sid, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Ethiopia; Mr. László Eduárd Mathé, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Hungary; Mr. Perks M. Ligoya, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Malawi; Mr. Erasmo Roberto Martínez Martínez, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Mexico; Mr. Deepak Dhital, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Nepal, based in Geneva; Mr. James Kimonyo, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Rwanda; Mr. Prasittiporn Wetprasit, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Thailand; Mr. Yevhenii Tsymbaliuk, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Ukraine; Mr. Mussa M. Haji, Permanent Representative of the United Republic of Tanzania; and Ms. Brenda Muntemba, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Zambia.

4. He bade farewell to the following departing members, thanking them for their contribution to the work of the Committee: Mr. Shemsudin Ahmed, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Ethiopia; Mr. Marcel R.D. Chirwa, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of Malawi; Mr. Dong-Gyou Choi, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea; Mr. Mohamed Ali Nur, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Somalia; Mr. Ittiporn Boonpracong, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Thailand and Ms. Batilda S. Burian, High Commissioner and Permanent Representative of the United Republic of Tanzania.

5. The agenda was adopted on the basis of the provisional agenda (UNEP/CRP/131/1).

Agenda item 2

Adoption of the minutes of the 130th meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, held on 31 March 2015

6. The Committee adopted the minutes of its 130th meeting on the basis of the draft minutes of the meeting (UNEP/CPR/131/2).

Agenda item 3

Report by the Executive Director to the Committee of Permanent Representatives

7. Introducing the item, the Executive Director drew attention to his report entitled "Report by the Executive Director of UNEP, including progress on the implementation of the resolutions adopted at the first session of the United Nations Environment Assembly held in June 2014".

8. He outlined a number of significant processes in which UNEP had been engaged in a scientific, technical, advisory or convening capacity. He noted that 2015 had been and would continue to be a year of intense activity for the international community and the multilateral system, with four major events being held that were closely related to the mandate of UNEP: the United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, held in Sendai, Japan, from 14 to 18 March 2015; the third International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held in Addis Ababa in July 2015; the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, to be held in New York in September 2015; and the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Paris in December 2015.

9. With regard to the third International Conference on Financing for Development, he said that the draft outcome document was in its final stages of elaboration, an intense negotiation and preparatory process was under way and it was anticipated that significant consensus would emerge around the financing for development agenda. The UNEP office in New York was fully engaged in the preparatory process and was organizing a number of events to be held during the Conference in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Africa and other partners.

10. Regarding the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, the Co-Facilitators of the intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda had issued the zero draft of the outcome document for the summit, entitled "Transforming our world by 2030". The draft included an overall framework for the post-2015 agenda and, in particular, the sustainable development goals, which had received support from member States. UNEP was engaged in providing advice to member States on the development of targets and indicators that would enable parties to monitor progress in the implementation of the sustainable development goals, review functions and ensure transparency, reporting on progress and accountability.

11. Turning to the preparations for the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, he said that there was growing concern among negotiators and heads of State and Government as to how a manageable outcome document would be prepared for the session. In that regard, the two Co-Chairs had been tasked with creating a more concise draft outcome document that would serve as a basis for discussions at the next round of meetings, to be held in September 2015. He noted that the preparation of the intended nationally determined contributions at the national level was generating a great deal of momentum around the world. In that regard, he drew attention to a UNEP report entitled *Climate Commitments of Subnational Actors and Business: A Quantitative Assessment of their Emission Reduction Impact*, which examined the significance of initiatives by non-State actors to cut greenhouse emissions.

12. Concerning the contribution by UNEP to the work of the Climate Technology Centre and Network, which provided technology support to countries in the context of the Framework Convention on Climate Change, significant progress had been made. The network had recently been described as "an incubator" for the United Nations-wide technology mechanism currently under discussion in New York .

13. The Climate and Clean Air Coalition, a voluntary initiative to address short-lived climate pollutants, had 104 members and an active programme of work that focused on gas flaring, black carbon and methane, among other things. The Coalition was a good example of how complementary initiatives could support the climate process.

14. UNEP had been actively engaged in providing advice to the secretariats and member States on technical and scientific issues during the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade and the seventh meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, held back to back in Geneva in May 2015. UNEP had also prepared a report on electronic and toxic waste, entitled *Waste Crime - Waste Risks: Gaps in Meeting the Global Waste Challenge*, launched during the back-to-back meetings, which had attracted a great deal of international attention. Although many decisions had been adopted during the meetings, parties had been unable to reach consensus on the issues of financing and compliance.

15. UNEP had also participated in the twelfth meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention), held in Punta del Este, Uruguay, in June 2015, a report of which would be sent to the representatives in due course.

16. Over the previous months, UNEP had been invited to contribute information and enhance engagement in a number of international forums. The Executive Director had been invited to attend the first official meeting of the environment ministers of Brazil, the Russian Federation, India, China and South Africa (BRICS countries), held in Moscow in April 2015, at which the green economy, emerging economies and competitiveness had been the core themes. During the meeting, participants had asked UNEP to contribute and provide advice to the newly established working group on the environment, which sought to identify priority areas of cooperation and consolidate efforts to develop policies aimed at contributing to mitigation efforts and adapting national economies to the impacts of climate change.

17. The work of UNEP had been explicitly recognized at the Group of Seven (G-7) Summit, held in Schloss Elmau, Germany, in June 2015, at which the International Resource Panel, considered a leading authority on the issue of resource efficiency, had been invited to prepare a report on the state of knowledge and to provide specific inputs to the future deliberations of the G-7. In the context of the new sustainable development agenda and goals, it was significant that the G-7 was focusing its attention on resource efficiency and moving toward a low-carbon economy. The Executive Director noted that the G-7 had put marine issues on its agenda for the first time, due in part to resolution 1/6, on marine plastic debris and microplastics, adopted by the Environment Assembly at its first session in June 2014, and to the work of the Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land-based Activities.

18. Discussions had been held during the twenty-fifth ordinary session of the Assembly of the African Union, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in June 2015, between UNEP, the African Group of Negotiators, the African Union, the African Development Bank and the Economic Commission for Africa on the development of an Africa-led initiative with the objective of doubling the energy infrastructure on the African continent in the following four years, which would represent the single largest step forward in the deployment of renewable energy on the continent.

19. At its sixty-eighth session, held in Geneva in May 2015, the World Health Assembly had adopted a resolution entitled "Health and the environment: addressing the health impact of air pollution", reaffirming the importance of the joint work undertaken by the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNEP through the Climate and Clean Air Coalition to bring black carbon and short-lived climate pollutants to the attention of health and environment ministries around the world.

20. The Islamic Development Bank had expressed a strong interest in strengthening its partnership with UNEP and had, accordingly, invited the Deputy Executive Director to co-chair a session on climate change during the fortieth Annual Meeting of the Islamic Development Bank, held in Maputo in June 2015. The two bodies were in the process of developing a memorandum of understanding to continue their partnership and establish a programme of work based on issues that had been discussed by the Environment Assembly at its first session.

21. The Deputy Executive Director of UNEP had also attended the Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, held in Doha in April 2015. In partnership with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, UNEP had brought the issue of the illegal trade in wildlife to an international governance domain in which environmental issues were not always present.

22. He drew attention to a number of recent meetings and announced a number of senior appointments in UNEP: Mr. Elliott Harris as Assistant Secretary-General and Head of the New York Office and the Environment Management Group of UNEP; Mr. Jorge Laguna-Celis as Secretary of Governing Bodies; Mr. Jiri Hlavacek as Special Adviser and Head of Multilateral Environmental Agreements Support and Cooperation in the Division of Environmental Law and Conventions; and Ms. Rosemary Semafumu Mukasa as Deputy Secretary of Governing Bodies. He also announced the appointment of Ms. Theresa Panuccio as Director of the Office for Operations and Corporate Services, following the retirement of Mr. Christophe Bouvier.

23. He said that UNEP had completed its accounts for 2014 in compliance with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) and that implementation of Umoja, the enterprise resource planning project, which represented the largest administrative and managerial reform project undertaken by the United Nations Secretariat, had begun in Nairobi on 1 June 2015. While the system was bound to present challenges, its deployment had been a success largely as a result of the significant work undertaken by the UNEP, United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and United Nations Office at Nairobi joint Nairobi deployment group.

24. Following an earthquake in Nepal in April 2015, UNEP had taken part in an emergency and disaster response mission led by the World Bank, the European Union and the United Nations through the joint UNEP/Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs environment unit.

25. World Environment Day on 5 June 2015, hosted by Italy in the context of the Milan Expo, had received an unprecedented response from around the world, with thousands of activities undertaken and pledges made involving 1.2 million participants in 140 countries.

26. Turning to the financial situation, he acknowledged with appreciation the decision taken by the newly formed Government of Belgium to resume its contributions to the Environment Fund. He also explained that UNEP would face a number of challenges in the coming months due to the sustained strengthening of the dollar, which could lead to a potential loss of $8-9 million dollars compared with the projections for 2015. The situation was being managed by reviewing expenditure patterns, matching unrestricted extrabudgetary contributions to the Fund and mobilizing additional resources over the remaining period of the 2014–2015 biennium. He appealed to member States to enhance their support to UNEP through contributions to the Environment Fund, explaining that the situation was expected to have a bearing on the project portfolio as many projects were funded in weaker currencies.

27. Drawing attention to the *Annual Report* for 2014 and the *UNEP Programme Performance Report* for 2014, he expressed his satisfaction at the progress achieved by UNEP to date. He also noted that an update had been provided to the Committee on the progress of implementation of the resolutions adopted by the Environment Assembly at its first session. Work had been initiated on all of the resolutions, although many would be implemented over a multi-biennium period. He encouraged representatives to request briefings with the secretariat for information on specific decisions if required.

28. He concluded his presentation with a selection of visual slides, illustrating the performance of UNEP through indicators of efficiency, effectiveness and productivity. They showed the progress made and the significant effort involved in enhancing the productivity of UNEP while managing an increased volume of finance and portfolio with a declining number of staff. The slide on overall budgetary performance revealed that the demand for its trust fund and the earmarked contributions given to implement its activities had exceeded estimates by more than 100 per cent, a testament to the demand for and visibility of the projects undertaken by UNEP.

29. In the context of the Global Environment Facility (GEF) trust fund, the volume of finance for which UNEP was responsible as an implementing agency was three times higher than had been budgeted.

30. Investments had been made to make the business processes of UNEP more efficient, resulting in a significant increase in the productivity of UNEP staff, despite the decrease in the number of staff from 900 in the biennium 2010–2011 to 840 in the biennium 2014–2015. The quality of management and accountability at UNEP had been confirmed by the virtually zero outstanding critical audit recommendations, which was largely attributable to the performance of the team at the Office for Operations and Corporate Services.

31. In accordance with the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), entitled "The future we want", in which heads of States and Government and high-level representatives had expressed their commitment to the strengthening of UNEP as the leading global environmental authority, the regional presence of UNEP had been strengthened through the establishment of a number of regional offices.

32. According to independent evaluations of its projects, UNEP had significantly improved its performance over the years. According to the overall outcome ratings for GEF projects by implementing agency, UNEP projects had consistently outperformed those of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Bank, with a final evaluation rating of moderately satisfactory or better in 90 per cent of cases.

33. He noted that the second tranche of the regular budget allocation increase for UNEP had been included in the programme of work for the biennium 2016–2017, which had been approved by the Environment Assembly, but the regular budget allocations had yet to be approved by the General Assembly. The second tranche was critical in the follow-up to Rio+20 because 94 per cent of the posts covered by the regular budget allocation were directly related to the implementation of the programme of work and 71 per cent of those posts were in the regional offices, while 17 per cent were posts devoted to the implementation of the programme of work at UNEP headquarters, including subprogramme coordinators and the post of Chief Scientist.

34. In the ensuing discussion, many representatives thanked the Executive Director for his comprehensive report and voiced their support for UNEP. Several representatives welcomed his summary of recent events and activities and one representative expressed satisfaction that UNEP was being called upon with increasing frequency to contribute its environmental expertise to other major forums. Many representatives thanked the secretariat for its dedicated work and for its efforts in implementing the outcomes of the first session of the Environment Assembly.

35. Concerning the update on the implementation of the resolutions adopted by the Environment Assembly at its first session, a number of representatives called for a more detailed and comprehensive briefing. Several representatives said that information on the implementation of the resolutions was of the utmost importance in preparing effectively for the second session and in assessing the performance of the Programme. One representative requested more information on problems encountered in the implementation of resolutions adopted at the first session and another called for updates specifically on resolutions 1/4 on the science-policy interface, 1/8 on ecosystem-based adaptation and 1/9 on the Global Environment Monitoring System Water Programme (GEMS/Water). One representative said that such updates should have been provided by June 2015, the halfway point between the first and second sessions of the Environment Assembly. Two representatives proposed that a briefing could take place at a subcommittee meeting in September, with one suggesting that the format of the action plans for the resolutions presented to the Committee in October 2014 should be used for the briefing.

36. A number of representatives asked the secretariat to conduct an analysis of its regional activities and the strengthening of its regional presence, an exercise it had been mandated to undertake in the Rio+20 outcome document. In addition to covering challenges, opportunities, impacts and lessons learned, the analysis should indicate which regions were reasonably well-covered by UNEP activities and identify the biggest gaps in coverage, particularly in view of key funding discussions that would be undertaken later in 2015.

37. The representative of Thailand commended UNEP on the success of the first Forum of Ministers and Environmental Authorities of Asia Pacific. He expressed gratitude on behalf of the Government of Thailand, a co-host of the Forum, to participating countries and said that he expected the shared regional views that had emerged during the Forum to feed into future meetings. Another representative, noting that the Forum was a means of strengthening the regional presence of UNEP, welcomed the opportunity it provided for member States to clarify regional priorities with regard to preparations for the second session of the Environment Assembly and the next UNEP medium-term strategy. He expressed the hope that the outcomes of regional forums would be reflected in discussions at the second session of the Environment Assembly and thanked the secretariat for preparing the first draft of the medium-term strategy for 2018–2021.

38. One representative thanked UNEP for facilitating the Conference on Illegal Exploitation and Illicit Trade in Wild Flora and Fauna in Africa, held in Brazzaville in March 2015, an African Union-mandated conference that had been convened with the objective of developing an African common strategy. At the twenty-fifth ordinary session of the African Union Assembly of Heads of State and Government, the necessity of developing regional safeguards and collective solutions to addressing the illegal trade had been recognized; the role of UNEP in integrating various activities was key in that regard.

39. One representative drew attention to the UNEP report entitled *Global Trends in Renewable Energy Investment 2015*, expressing the view that it contained insufficient information on Africa. He said that he would welcome more information on prospects and initiatives in Africa in terms of renewable energy sources. A greater focus on the global South would be interesting and encouraging for developing countries. He asked for clarification on the UNEP approach to the concept of financial

and debt sustainability in the context of the market for renewable energy sources and with regard to environmental sustainability. He commended a report by the panel of experts to the second preparatory committee meeting for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development entitled "The transition to a green economy: benefits, challenges and risks from a sustainable development perspective", which, among other things, outlined the risks facing developing countries. Any celebration of the renewable energy sector needed to be balanced against an awareness of the seriousness of the inherent risks of the sector.

40. One representative expressed her appreciation for the support of UNEP in implementing the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries (UN-REDD Programme). The Programme had 58 partner countries, 15 of which were in the Latin America and the Caribbean region. Another representative said that Latin America and the Caribbean had experienced gaps in the implementation of UNEP projects and programmes and appealed for more attention to be paid to the region, which, he said, was of crucial importance environmentally and ecologically.

41. Two representatives, including one speaking on behalf of a group of countries, said that they were looking forward to the distribution of two reports by the secretariat on the UNEP policy on access to information: a summary of comments on the policy made by member States and a revised draft of the policy.

42. One representative commended UNEP on its successful and timely deployment of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards and Umoja, the enterprise resource planning project, noting that the Nairobi team had worked extremely hard, exhibiting a cooperative team spirit that would carry them forward as they continued to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the new systems.

43. One representative, referring to the overview of 2014 provided by the Executive Director, sought clarification on the shortfall of $20 million in budgeted income for the Environment Fund and its possible impact on UNEP activities, the unexpectedly high extrabudgetary funding and the increased funding for GEF projects. Voicing her strong support for UNEP as a knowledge provider, she welcomed the more balanced and stronger regional presence of UNEP and the positive feedback from the GEF Evaluation Office on the high project outcome ratings in the UNEP/GEF portfolio.

44. One representative, noting that the need for the prevention of and protection from disasters had been highlighted at the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, held in Sendai, Japan, in March 2015, called on UNEP to prioritize the challenges posed by disasters, including those caused by the increasing environmental damage being inflicted by terrorists internationally.

45. Responding to comments, the Executive Director said that additional information and analysis would be provided on the implementation of the resolutions adopted by the Environment Assembly at its first session, possibly using the action plans as a framework, and a strategic analysis of its regional presence would also be produced.

46. He said that further work would be undertaken to refine the data contained in the *Global Trends in Renewable Energy Investment 2015* report; as renewable energy initiatives evolved in Africa, more information would become available. The International Renewable Energy Agency was also a repository of relevant data.

47. On the access-to-information policy, the secretariat was aiming to produce a draft revised policy in August and the revised policy in October 2015, after soliciting input from member States in July.

48. Significant currency fluctuations in 2014 had had an impact on budgetary allocations, necessitating a more proactive management of funds. Unrestricted contributions made by member States for the financing of the programme of work had been used to try to balance the figures. Extrabudgetary funding had also been used in certain areas where funding from the Environment Fund had fallen short.

49. Noting that GEF financing was not in the form of pledges to UNEP, but rather in the form of allocations transacted through UNEP over which it did not have much control, he said that the GEF-5 highest level of approvals of $550 million had been unexpected even though they were for projects that would continue for a period of years.

Agenda item 4

Briefing on the contribution of the Committee of Permanent Representatives to the preparation of the second session of the United Nations Environment Assembly and the second open-ended meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives

50. In the discussion on agenda item 4, regarding the second open-ended meeting of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, to be held in February 2016, many representatives said that the session should be structured so that no more than two parallel meetings were held at any one time. Parallel meetings made it difficult for smaller delegations with limited resources to play an active role. One representative said that night sessions should also be avoided. Many representatives expressed the view that sufficient funding should be provided by the UNEP secretariat to enable the participation of representatives, including experts from developing and least developed countries. One representative welcomed the readiness of many member States to compromise on the structure of the session.

51. A number of representatives highlighted the importance of adequate and timely preparations and consultations during the intersessional period with the aim of achieving consensus on issues before the Committee at its second open-ended meeting and the Environment Assembly at its second session. Several representatives called for pre-session documents, including draft resolutions, to be circulated well in advance of meetings to avoid lengthy discussions as had occurred in the past. The Committee at its second open-ended meeting should focus on issues relating to the second session of the Environment Assembly. Draft resolutions submitted to the Environment Assembly for its consideration should stress the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development and highlight the Rio+20 principles, especially the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. A number of representatives said that the second session of the Environment Assembly should follow up on decisions adopted at the first session. One representative said that a shorter agenda would enhance discussions and another said that the number of draft resolutions should be limited to enable all member States to engage in discussions thereon.

52. Several representatives welcomed the document entitled "The vision for UNEA-2: a food for thought paper by the Chair of the CPR" on the themes for the high-level segment of the second session of the Environment Assembly. A few representatives said that they would have preferred to have received it well in advance of the present meeting. A number requested more detailed information from the secretariat on the overarching theme and on the two suggested focused priorities before the subcommittee meeting to be held on 30 June 2015.

53. Concerning the overarching theme for the high-level segment, many representatives expressed a preference for the single theme of "Delivering on the environmental dimension of the post-2015 development agenda", which, they suggested, was of particular relevance as the session would be one of the first high-level international meetings to be held after the anticipated adoption of the post-2015 development agenda. Consensus should be reached as soon as possible on a strategic, forward-looking and well-defined theme that would reassert the leadership of UNEP in global environmental issues and make the most of the opportunity provided by the participation of ministers, promoting real exchanges and guiding in-depth discussions to develop succinct recommendations on environmental goals. One representative stressed the need for practical analysis under an overarching theme, in which the challenges were examined from an integral perspective involving strengthened cooperation between countries and regions. Another representative expressed the view that only one theme should be discussed owing to time restraints, describing the proposed overarching theme as a cross-cutting topic that would enable UNEP to focus on its mandate of tackling international environmental issues.

54. One representative welcomed the proposal to have two focused and specific priorities such as "Healthy People – Healthy Environment" and "Mobilizing resources for sustainable investments" under the main theme, saying that this would enrich the discussions, and suggested that a summary by the Chair would be a suitable outcome for the high-level segment.

55. Concurring with the choice of the overarching theme, one representative, speaking on behalf of a group of countries, said that the two focused priorities were of interest and could be appropriate for guiding discussions among ministers and demonstrating the challenges of implementing the development agenda. He questioned whether the umbrella theme and the two headline messages could be given sufficient attention in a two-day period. Concerning the two focused priorities, he expressed a preference for the health theme in which different aspects could be incorporated. The second theme, of investment, could be tackled in a shorter meeting, in a manner similar to that adopted for the discussion on the illegal trade in wildlife at the first session of the Environment Assembly. He asked UNEP to elaborate on the themes and the organization of the high-level segment. He sought

clarification on the structure of the ministerial segment, the approach to questions on implementation of the environmental dimension, and how the discussion would be reflected in the outcome of the Environment Assembly. On the suggested change in the cycle of the Environment Assembly sessions from even years to odd years, he asked for an analysis of the consequences thereof.

Another representative, drawing attention to the importance of the Environment Assembly as a key international forum for addressing environmental issues, expressed concern that the overarching theme was too broad and would lead to prepared remarks by heads of delegations on a wide range of issues. It would therefore be difficult to distil and agree upon meaningful and actionable outcomes. The focused priority on financing would have already been comprehensively covered at the third International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa in July 2015 and, moreover, was likely to lead to contentious and unproductive discussions among member States, which might represent a setback for the Assembly. He proposed the topic of air quality as a more suitable and focused theme for the high-level segment. He sought clarification on the questions that ministers would address; the organization of the themes and the envisaged outcome of discussions. Greater clarity was essential if consensus was to be reached by the Committee on a concrete proposal for the Bureau of the Environment Assembly to consider in July 2015.

56. One representative expressed his satisfaction at the focused priority on health, which, he said, could lead into discussions on many environmental problems. He noted that the issue of decarbonization and the African initiative on renewable sources of energy should be included in discussions on that theme.

57. Another representative said that he did not support the topic of resource mobilization as it was not clear how environment ministers could contribute to such a discussion. He asked for more information on the themes and on several specific questions: how to avoid a contentious and unproductive discussion; how to achieve a meaningful discussion by environment ministers on financing; specific areas of focus; linkages with the outcome of the third International Conference on Financing for Development; and options in terms of the format of the high-level discussions.

58. One representative expressed reservations on the proposal to have two focused priorities under the main theme, suggesting that the theme related to health could infringe on the mandate of other international entities such as WHO and that the second theme of resource mobilization could limit the discussion by focusing attention on public and private investment. A broader discussion was called for in which alternative models other than the green economy model for sustainable financing were considered.

59. Several representatives drew attention to paragraph 56 of the Rio+20 outcome document, affirming that different approaches, visions, models and tools were available to each country, in accordance with its national circumstances and priorities, to achieve the overarching objective of sustainable development; they concurred that, in discussions on resource mobilization for sustainability, that paragraph should be borne in mind and models other than that of the green economy should be recognized and considered.

60. A number of representatives called for the urgent approval of a draft stakeholder engagement policy that took into account the concerns of all member States. They expressed their commitment to the effective and inclusive participation of all stakeholders at the second session of the Environment Assembly, especially representatives of developing countries and least developed countries, and highlighted the key responsibility of member States as decision makers and drivers of the new development agenda.

61. Responding to comments, the Executive Director said that there was an emerging consensus that delivery of the environmental dimension of the post-2015 development agenda and the role of UNEP therein should be chosen as the overarching theme for the second session of the Environment Assembly in order to achieve a focused political agenda. The "Food for thought paper" provided a sound basis for further work and the secretariat would provide more information on the two proposed focused priorities. With regard to the first proposed theme of health under the overarching theme, he said that "Healthy People – Healthy Environment" could act as a productive focus for ministers to explore the framework of the sustainable development goals, linking the goals with a healthy population and healthy ecosystems. On the green economy, he stressed that UNEP was continuing to work on different models and did not only promote one model. The transformations and transitions of the post-2015 development agenda would require a rethinking of investments in many areas including infrastructure; if environment ministers were not involved in the financing of environmental change, their suggestions were likely to be dismissed. Financing challenges were experienced by all countries and examples of best practice by member States would be of interest to ministers.

62. Concerning the structure of the second open-ended meeting of the Committee, he noted that a clear message on arrangements had been communicated and consensus reached on how to proceed. He agreed that effective preparations were essential in ensuring the success of the second session of the Environment Assembly and noted that the secretariat was in the process of updating a paper analysing the advantages and disadvantages of changing the cycle of the Environment Assembly sessions to odd years, which would be circulated to member States.

63. Responding to comments, the Chair said that, at the second open-ended meeting of the Committee, to be held in February 2016, a maximum of two parallel meetings would be held at any one time and, if night sessions were necessary, they would finish by 7.30 p.m. He concurred on the importance of making the best possible use of the intersessional period. With regard to the selection of themes for the high-level segment, the "Food for thought paper" would be amended as discussed and considered anew in the next subcommittee meeting.

Agenda item 5

Report of the subcommittee of the Committee of Permanent Representatives

64. Introducing the item, the Chair drew attention to his report on the work of the subcommittee.

65. The Committee took note of the report.

Agenda item 6

Election of the Bureau of the Committee of Permanent Representatives

66. In accordance with Governing Council decision 19/32 and the principles of rotation and equitable geographical representation among the various regional groups of posts in the Bureau of the Committee of Permanent Representatives, the following officers were elected by acclamation for the period 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2017, after nomination by their respective regional groups:

Chair:	Ms. Julia Pataki (Romania)
Vice-Chair:	Mr. John Moreti (Botswana)
Vice-Chair:	Ms. Marcela Nicodemos (Brazil)
Rapporteur:	Ms. Corinna Enders (Germany)

Agenda item 7

Other matters

67. One representative requested that interaction with the Executive Director be increased and that other environmental stakeholders be given the opportunity to participate in the discussions of the Committee of Permanent Representatives.

Agenda item 8

Closure of the meeting

68. The meeting was declared closed at 1.10 p.m. on Tuesday, 16 June 2015.